

Bright will rededicate Swing Bridge Park in Sea Bright, N.J., in his honor.

The Sea Bright residents who will attend know well how hard Mayor Rooney worked over a 20-year period—first as a Councilman and then as Mayor—to get the state and federal funds to protect Sea Bright from the many “Nor’easters” that threatened the lives and property of residents. Over the years, these seasonal storms, with their ferocious winds and pounding surf, robbed Sea Bright of its protective seawall and buffer beaches to the point that the town might not have survived another storm season.

My colleagues, you know more about Mayor Rooney and Sea Bright than you realize, because it was to Sea Bright that the New York and national television stations would go for some fearsome footage whenever a hurricane came up the East Coast. Each time, I would talk to a very concerned Mayor Rooney on the phone and later meet him on a tour of the damage and we would agree to press harder and speed up the schedule to repair the seawall and reconstruct the beaches. And, colleagues, it was your vote, year-after-year that helped us finally make the repairs that resulted in the completion of the multi-million dollar Army Corps of Engineers Shore Protection Project along much of the coastline of my district.

Charles Rooney was a man who served his community like no other I know. His eight years as union representative in the Steel Workers Union helped prepare him for the leadership and coalition building skills he would later utilize as Councilman and Mayor. He served as president of the local chamber of commerce and established the senior citizens club, the borough recreation center and the youth program. In November, he was inducted into the League Municipalities “Mayors’ Hall of Fame” and in January into the “Elected Officials Hall of Fame” for having served more than 20 years in local government.

There was an amazing personal side to Charles Rooney. He had tremendous character and was himself a character. He used to say that when he took office, the town of Sea Bright was famous for having twenty-one liquor licenses and to reverse the common attitude of “let’s party in Sea Bright,” somebody had to be tough. It was that toughness that turned Sea Bright back into a beautiful family resort as it was during the glory days at the turn of the century.

It was also his political toughness, combined with his middle-aged entry into long distance running that gave him the nickname of “Iron Man Rooney.” Starting at the age of 48, he ran in 17 career marathons, inspired by another shore legend, Dr. George Sheehan, “The Running Doc” of Rumson. Mayor Rooney ran the entire length of the New Jersey Atlantic Coastline, from Sandy Hook to Cape May in just over four days. As the sponsor of local marathons, “he always cheered the loudest for the people coming in last. He’d be there for the lady running 13-minute miles, when no one else was there. He’d put the biggest smile on her face, making her feel like she’d just won the race,” said his son, Charles Rooney III.

It was appropriate that the dedication of Charles Rooney Swing Bridge Park is taking place on Fathers Day, because Mayor Rooney was the father of so many wonderful environmental improvement projects that enhanced

the quality of life in Sea Bright for its residents and others to enjoy. He was also a tremendous role model, not only for his son and daughter, but for all of us in public service who could learn so much from the warm and wonderful way he served the people of Sea Bright.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM TURNER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 51, I was absent because of my participation in a congressional delegation trip to Russia with members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Research and Development for the purpose of discussing with the Russian Duma pending anti-missile defense legislation. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on H.R. 774

APPLE AND ONION DISASTER LEGISLATION, H.R. 2237

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, the plight of the apple and onion farmers of New York State remains a major concern for many of us in Congress who represent New York State. Following the severe, inclement weather that devastated crops in various Counties throughout our state last year, our farmers found themselves hampered by an ineffective federal crop insurance policy and a bureaucracy that showed very little compassion.

Hardest hit by last year’s storm were New York State’s apple and onion farmers. Our onion producers in Pine Island, NY in particular, faced catastrophic losses due to a hail storm that passed through the region on May 31st of last year. That storm left many of our farmers with no considerable yields, forcing many to zero out their crops, leaving them without a marketable product.

Faced with last year’s losses and still recovering from losses incurred in 1996, our farmers looked to their crop insurance for assistance. What they found instead was an inadequate program that did nothing to assuage the burden that their losses placed upon them.

Regrettably, the Department of Agriculture’s response to our farmers plight has been a case of too little, too late. Following last year’s hail storm, Congress passed the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1998, which approved \$5.9 billion dollars in disaster assistance for affected farmers nationwide. While payments were made directly and immediately to hog, wheat, cotton and dairy farmers, action to ease our apple and onion farmers plight was much too slow in coming. A sign-up period was enacted by the Secretary for affected apple and onion farmers which was initially to last from February 1, 1999 to May 11, 1999.

The sign-up period proved to be a disaster within itself. Met with poor training, inadequate staffing and numerous delays, our farmers did not see one penny of the disaster assistance

until just last week, one year later and months into this year’s planting season.

This legislation, H.R. 2237 co-sponsored by Congressman WALSH, provides that the Secretary of Agriculture authorize \$40 billion for additional disaster assistance to affected apple and onion farmers in New York State, so that they may fully recover from the damage and losses that they have incurred over the past three years. We look forward to working with the Secretary of Agriculture in the coming months to work towards the implementation of these funds, as well as a thorough revision of the federal crop insurance program, so that we may ensure that the future of our nation’s farmers remain prosperous.

H.R. 2237

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EMERGENCY CROP LOSS ASSISTANCE FOR NEW YORK APPLE PRODUCERS.

(a) ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—In addition to other authorities available to the Secretary of Agriculture to provide assistance to apple producers who incur crop losses, the Secretary may provide assistance under this section to apple producers in the State of New York who incurred losses in 1998 to apple crops due to damaging weather or related conditions.

(b) SPECIAL RULES.—In providing assistance to apple producers under this section, the Secretary shall calculate the amount of a apple producer’s payment in a manner that—

(1) does not discount excess juice production;

(2) allows producers in 1998 to use their historical production as a yield basis;

(3) ensures that losses in each marketing category (primary, secondary, and tertiary) are only added together, and not subtracted as currently proposed by the Department of Agriculture; and

(4) uses the 5-year average market price for apples in New York as established by the National Agriculture Statistics Service.

(c) MAXIMUM PAYMENT LIMITATION.—In providing assistance to apple producers under this section, the maximum payment limitation per farm shall be equal to the higher of—

(1) \$80,000; or

(2) the product of \$1,350 and the total farm orchard acreage.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall issue guidelines for the provision of assistance under this section, which shall be available to affected apple producers not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. Subject to the availability of funds for this purpose, the Secretary shall make payments available under this section in an expeditious time frame in order to alleviate the severe financial strain of New York State apple producers.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY CROP LOSS ASSISTANCE FOR NEW YORK ONION PRODUCERS.

(a) ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—In addition to other authorities available to the Secretary of Agriculture to provide assistance to onion producers who incur crop losses, the Secretary may provide assistance under this section to onion producers in the State of New York who incurred losses in 1998 to onion crops due to damaging weather or related conditions.

(b) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible for assistance under this section, the Secretary must conclude that, because of damaging weather or related condition in 1998, the total quantity of the 1998 onion crop that a New York onion producer was able to harvest was less than 65 percent of the producer’s historical yield. The Secretary may

accept information provided by insurance adjusters or the Cooperative Extension Service to verify a producer's loss in yield.

(c) CALCULATION OF PAYMENT.—

(1) PAYMENT FORMULA.—In providing assistance to an eligible onion producer under this section, the per acre amount of the producer's payment shall be equal to the product of—

(A) .65;

(B) the applicable annual percentage history; and

(C) payment rate.

(2) ANNUAL PERCENTAGE HISTORY.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), a producer may select as the producer's annual percentage history either the producer's own historical yield before 1996, per hundredweight, or the New York State average of 298 cwt.

(3) PAYMENT RATE.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(C), the Secretary shall use the 5-year average market price for yellow onions of \$15.00 cwt.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall issue guidelines for the provisions of assistance under this section, which shall be available to affected onion producers not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. Subject to the availability of funds for this purpose, the Secretary shall make payments available under this section in an expeditious time frame in order to alleviate the severe financial strain of New York State onion producers.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated \$40,000,000 to carry out this Act.

**THE KOSOVO LIBERATION ARMY:
A NAIVE VIEW OF A REBEL FORCE**

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues this June 9, 1999, Omaha World Herald editorial that cautions NATO not to underestimate the ambitions of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) after the Serbian forces withdrawal from Kosovo.

**THE KOSOVO LIBERATION ARMY: A NAIVE VIEW
OF REBEL FORCE**

NATO told Yugoslavia it would stop the air war if Serbian forces were pulled out of the province of Kosovo in one week. It's easy to understand why Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic found that idea hard to swallow. He does not want to surrender Kosovo to the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Milosevic sent Serbian soldiers and police into Kosovo to put down a rebellion led by the KLA. The ethnic-Albanian KLA wants independence for Kosovo, whose majority population is ethnic Albanian. Or at least it was before Milosevic, a Serb who obtained political power by exploiting ethnic hatred, managed to kill thousands and expel hundreds of thousands of ethnic-Albanian Kosovars.

News reports say Milosevic nearly succeeded in wiping out the KLA, but the rebels have regrouped. Fueled by recruits from the roughly one million Kosovar refugees Milosevic has created, the KLA reportedly is regaining ground in Kosovo. Some reports indicated that the KLA is helping NATO target Serbian forces in Kosovo.

The KLA and Milosevic's Serbian forces are engaged in the latest round of an ethnic blood feud that is centuries old. Yet here's

what NATO spokesman Jamie Shea had to say about a settlement: "As the Serb forces pull out and the NATO forces move into Kosovo, we expect the Kosovo Liberation Army . . . not to try to take advantage of the situation."

Shea must be dreaming. The KLA, in its view, is fighting to liberate its homeland. "The KLA will be the sole force in Kosovo creating institutions," said a KLA spokesman Sunday. "It will be the strongest force influencing the future of Kosovo." The KLA is planning to build a nation of ethnic Albanians in what is now Yugoslavian territory.

Of a proposed NATO peacekeeping force, Shea said, "NATO forces will be operating under strict rules of engagement and, of course, they will not tolerate any hindrance to their mission. More specifically, we hope the (KLA) will renounce violence."

Imagine France announcing in the early 1780s that, upon cessation of the war between England and the American colonies, the colonies would become an autonomous zone within the British empire and would be occupied by a European peacekeeping force. Oh, and the American freedom fighters, it is assumed, would "renounce violence."

NATO's next adversary in Kosovo might be the KLA.

**THE MEDICAL MALPRACTICE Rx
ACT**

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, today Representative JIM GREENWOOD of Pennsylvania and I are introducing the Medical Malpractice Rx Act.

The Medical Malpractice Rx Act will prevent the unreasonable and frivolous litigation that has caused many doctors to waste resources on "defensive medicine." According to the Congressional Research Service, many analysts have observed that physicians' fears of malpractice suits have caused them to perform additional or unnecessary tests and procedures that serve to drive the cost of health insurance to unaffordable levels for many Americans.

Malpractice insurance premiums for physicians total over \$6 billion annually, and the rate of malpractice cases has doubled over the past ten years.

The Act prevents plaintiffs from recovering 100 percent of damages from one party when multiple parties are at fault and sets a \$250,000 cap on noneconomic (pain and suffering) damages. In addition, the Medical malpractice Rx Act allows juries to hear evidence of multiple recoveries paid to plaintiffs.

The Medical Malpractice Rx Act allows trial lawyers a maximum of five years from the date of injury to bring a medical malpractice suit, replacing the often vague current law which permits lawsuits 7–10 years from the date of injury.

Finally, the Act requires the losing party to pay attorney's fees.

It is estimated that the Medical Malpractice Rx Act could save the Medicare program \$1.5 billion over 10 years and billions more could be saved on private health premiums. These savings will translate into savings for all Americans.

We must act to ensure Americans have access to affordable health insurance and pre-

vent the cost of insurance from reaching even more exorbitant levels.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important piece of legislation.

TRIBUTE TO LORA LUCKS

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Lora Lucks, an outstanding individual who has dedicated her life to public service and education. She will be honored on Thursday, June 17 for her outstanding contributions to the community during the end of the term party at PS 48 in my South Bronx Congressional district. She is retiring after 23 years as Principal of PS 48.

Born and raised in Brooklyn and a graduate of CUNY Brooklyn, Lora Lucks started her teaching career at Mark Twain Junior High School. She also attended St. John's University and Fordham University where she majored in Education Administration. Thirty two years ago she joined P.S. 48 in the Bronx where she started her supervisory career. For the past 23 years she has served as Principal at P.S. 48 and played a prominent role as a true educational leader. She is responsible for the education and well being of a student body of over 1,100 children and a staff of over 150.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the daily educational services she provides to the students, Mrs. Lucks has been the Project Director of the Hunts Point Cultural Arts Center for the past 16 years. This after-school program nurtures the artistic talents of and fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment in students within the South Bronx Community. Having forged a strong alliance with businesses, organizations, and foundations, Lora has been able to bring much-needed resources to the school and the children of Hunts Point. The Y.M.C.A.'s Pathways for Youths Program and District 8 sponsored programs are just a few of the wonderful activities offered by the school after school hours. During the course of her principalship, Lora has made Public School 48 the pride of District 8 schools.

Through her years of service she has been given many awards. In 1992 she was honored as the District 8 Supervisor of the year and in 1993 she was the recipient of the Reliance Award for Excellence in Education.

Although not a resident of Hunts Point, she is very active in community affairs. Lora has become a member of the Bronx Borough President's Solid Waste Advisory Board and the Hunts Point Economic Development Corporation.

Mrs. Lucks leaves us with many lessons learned in community service, leadership in education, and wisdom. A talented leader and educator, Mrs. Lucks will continue sharing her knowledge and views with her family and friends.

Mrs. Lucks is married and has two sons, Stuart and Robert, two grandchildren, Arie and Megan, and a daughter-in-law, Charlotte. Her husband, Solomon, is a retired New York City educator and supervisor. He served as the chairman of the Technology Department at Bayside High School for 27 years.